

# **Nuts & Bolts DoD Fire Fighter Certification**

## **VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS**



Every DoD fire fighter must complete training that is prescribed for every duty position in DoD fire departments and obtain certification in the DoD Fire Fighter Certification System (FFCS). These certifications are prescribed in the GS-081 Qualification Standard and must be met to qualify for DoD fire fighter positions. Moreover, certification requirements, as with other requirements in the OPM Qualification Standard, must be met BEFORE even being able to compete for positions. In other words, in order to be considered qualified and referred for any DoD fire fighter position at the GS-5 level and above, individuals must hold the certifications required for the position being filled. Without the required certifications individuals cannot even be considered for the position because they do not meet the basic qualifications. The only exception is for entry-level fire fighter positions (GS-081-03 and GS-081-04); certifications may be obtained within one year after hire date.

Vacancy announcements CANNOT REQUIRE more qualifying criteria, to include DoD certifications, than published in the Qualification Standard. When DOD modified the OPM Qualification Standard for the GS-081 series, specific certifications for each position in DoD fire departments were established and cannot be exceeded.

For announcements to fill entry-level fire fighter positions (GS-081-03 or 4), DO NOT include DoD, IFSAC or NPQB certifications as requirements or selective placement factors.

The announcement should contain a statement notifying applicants of the certifications they will be required to obtain within the first year. It could also have a statement requesting that they list any certifications they may already have. In the "basis of rating paragraph" you could state that credit will be given to those individuals who possess certification. This is no different than stating individuals must be able to obtain a clearance or physical or whatever. This enables selecting officials to give more weight to those individuals who possess some of the certifications when filling entry level GS-3 and 4 positions. In other words, use the certifications as a quality ranking factor on the crediting plan. This is similar to managers who feel that individuals with college educations are better qualified than individuals without is and give more credit for an individual with a degree than an individual without it.

Contents of this Nuts & Bolts has been coordinated with Ms. Gale Perryman, OSD/CPMS.

